

The American West

—a changing cultural landscape





Workshop Overview

By Kathleen Ferenz

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Workshop Overview and Purpose:

The rich array of primary sources in American Memory offers us an opportunity to explore and question literary and historical themes in “*The American West*”. These resources help us ask questions of ourselves and others in our quest to understand the history that determines who we are today.

In this workshop, we will use a variety of multimedia items to investigate the formation of a “western” cultural identity as it formed in the American West in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. *How did people survive and thrive in the American West?* Through the use of prints, photos, text, sound, and film, we will examine and compare how the environment, the natural resources, and the migration of diverse peoples have influenced the development of our cultural identity that transcend this period of history to our lives today in the West.

The techniques, tools, and instructional structures for this workshop provide a framework for a study in local history, cultural identity, and document analysis. We will learn to analyze and use the multimedia items from the American Memory collection.

Objectives:

At the end of this workshop participants will:

- know more about how to apply critical analysis strategies to multimedia resources (audio, text-based, film, and photos) and be able to formulate questions and hypothesis about the context and meaning of the source(s)
- be able to use primary sources to question, critique, and assess an object’s value in the reconstruction of the history of our cultural identity in the American West
- be able to develop a lesson for students that uses multimedia resources in teaching historical and social science analysis skills

Tasks in Brief

In this workshop, participants will:

- practice using primary sources to question, critique, and assess an object’s value in the reconstruction of the history of our cultural identity in the American West
- select and interpret multimedia resources from several American Memory collections to deepen and question the formation of a uniquely “western” American identity
- demonstrate an understanding of content through performance using several strategies, for example: “tableau,” dialogue, etc.
- discuss how unique environmental factors in the American West converged with the social and political events of the late 19th and early 20th century in the formation of a uniquely “western” cultural identity



American Memory

- Buckaroos in Paradise: Ranching Culture in Northern Nevada, 1945-1982
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ncrhtml/crhome.html>
- California Gold: Northern California Folk Music from the Thirties, Collected by Sidney Robertson Cowell
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afcchtml/cowhome.html>
- "California as I Saw It": First-Person Narratives of California's Early Years, 1849-1900
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/cbhtml/cbhome.html>
- The Northern Great Plains, 1880-1920: Photographs from the Fred Hultstrand and F.A. Pazandak Photograph Collections
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/ndahtml/ngphome.html>
- Voices from the Dust Bowl: The Charles L. Todd and Robert Sonkin Migrant Worker Collection, 1940-1941
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afcthtml/tshome.html>
- Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/smhtml/smhome.html>

Additional Resources

- Additional Resources from the California Heritage Collection
<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/CalHeritage/>
- *My first summer in the Sierra*, by John Muir
[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/calbkib:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(amrv+vg18\)\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/calbkib:@field(NUMBER+@band(amrv+vg18)))
- *The mountains of California*, by John Muir
[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/calbkib:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(amrv+vr04\)\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/calbkib:@field(NUMBER+@band(amrv+vr04)))
- The Mudcat Cafe, a site for folk and blues music
<http://www.mudcat.org>
- 19th-Century California Sheet Music
<http://www.sims.berkeley.edu/~mkduggan/neh.html>
- The Land of Glittering Dreams is a site with transcribed letters from miners
<http://www.glittering.com/letters/index.html>
- The Museum of the City of San Francisco has secondary source texts and images
<http://www.sfmuseum.org/>



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Facilitator’s Guide

Time	Activity	Preparation, Materials & Equipment
10 min	<p>Introduction and Overview</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of the content of the workshop Demo of web-based multimedia about the American West from American Memory Document analysis with multimedia <p>Describe the purpose of the workshop.</p>	<p>Binder of workshop materials Mini multimedia demonstration of web-based resources</p>
10 min	<p>Concept Mapping Activity in brief <i>What do you know?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate a discussion What do you know about key events and people of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the American West? Create a concept map Discussion question: <i>How did people survive and thrive in the American West?</i> Debrief and share concept maps Debrief with the concept map Lead a discussion to help participants organize the contents of their maps into categories. Introduce the cultural concept of resilience. 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chart paper & markers



Time	Activity	Preparation, Materials & Equipment
50 min	<p>Orientation Activity</p> <p><i>Investigating culture and document analysis with multimedia</i></p> <p>The purpose of the orientation activity is to introduce the Document Analysis tool and resilience. Participants will use a specific set of multimedia and documents to practice in-depth analysis of a source. Specifically, this activity will investigate the cultural concept of <i>resilience</i> with multimedia sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a whole group Discuss the concept of resilience. Review the Document Analysis tool, and group roles • In small groups Each group completes one Task Card • As a whole group Cinquain presentations Compare worksheets and check for agreements Discuss two aspects of resilience: (1) an individual's traits, (2) an individual's network of support 	<p>Materials</p> <p>Group #1 Task Card #1 – Clementine Task #1 Resource Cards Additional Resource Cards Document Analysis worksheet Group roles Resilience Cinquain</p> <p>Group #2 Task Card #2 – Sweet Betsy from Pike Task #2 Resource Cards Document Analysis Worksheet Additional Resource Cards Document Analysis worksheet Group roles Resilience Cinquain</p> <p>Equipment Computers & CD-ROMs (audio)</p> <p>Collection California Gold: Northern California Folk Music from the Thirties. Collected by Sidney Robertson Cowell</p> <p>Clementine: http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cowellbib:@field(UMBER+@band(afccc+a3348b1)NUMBER+@band(afccc+a3348b1))</p> <p>Betsy from Pike: {print tiff view of page 445 – goldr0004.tif} http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cowell:@field(DOCID+@lit(GOLDR))</p> <p>Voices from the Dust Bowl: The Charles L. Todd and Robert Sonkin Migrant Worker Collection, 1940-1941 Sweet Betsy from Pike: http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/toddbib:@field(DOCID+@lit(4099a2))</p> <p>Sheet Music Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885</p> <p>Clementine: http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mussm&fileName=sm1885/04600/04660/mussm04660.db&recNum=0</p>



Time	Activity	Preparation, Materials & Equipment
60 min	<p>Group Activities for Inquiry Independent small group activities</p> <p>These activities provide groups a chance to work independently and produce a product of their learning. The culminating product is shared with the whole group.</p>	
10 min	<p>Inquiry Activity #1 Life on the Frontier</p> <p>Inquiry Activity #2 Do Something for Wildness</p>	<p>Materials</p> <p>Inquiry Activity #1 Life On the Frontier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Card • Document Analysis worksheet • Resilience • Group roles <p>Equipment - computers</p> <p>American Memory Collection “California as I Saw It”: First-Person Narratives of California’s Early Years, 1849-1900</p> <p>Mountains and Molehills; or, Recollections of a Burnt Journal. By Frank Marryat</p> <p>http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/calbkbib:@field(UMBER+@band(calbkI+010)NUMBER+@band(calbkI+010))</p> <p>The Northern Great Plains, 1880-1920: Photographs from the Fred Hultstrand and F.A. Pazandak Photograph Collections</p> <p>Photo John Bakken sod house, Milton, North Dakota http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/award97:@filreq(@field(NUMBER+@band(ndfahult+c06I))+@field(COLLID+ndfa))</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>...continued</i></p>



Time	Activity	Preparation, Materials & Equipment
		<p>Photo Mr. & Mrs. David Vincent and daughter, Martha, by their sod house: near White River, South Dakota.</p> <p>http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/award97:@filreq(@field(NUMBER+@band(ndfahult+b007))+@field(COLLID+ndfa))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource #1 –Task Card • Resource #2 – Resource cards • Computers & CD-ROMs (audio) • Document Analysis Worksheet • Resource Card Group Roles <p>Inquiry Activity #2 Do Something for Wildness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task card • Document Analysis worksheet • Resilience • Group roles <p>American Memory Collection</p> <p>The Evolution of the Conservation Movement, 1850-1920 (multi-format collection)</p> <p>Equipment Computers & CD-ROMs (audio)</p>
10 min	Group Performance, Group Discussion, Activity Debrief	
10 min	Evaluation	Evaluation form



Workshop

The American West

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Introduction and Overview

10 minutes

Background information

This workshop is based on several curriculum design principles that have been developed and tested by K-12 educators in a San Francisco-based research and development project called the Bay Area National Digital Library Project. Exercises in this workshop offer participants an opportunity to experience lessons that use the multimedia resources from American Memory and that broadly apply an instructional approach and curriculum design model called Complex Instruction. This approach is designed to increase student access to learning through group work. The content is developed with the support of scholars.

Using Multimedia Sources

American Memory includes numerous types and formats of sources including photographs, manuscripts, rare books, sheet music, maps, recorded sound, and moving pictures. We will use multimedia sources from several collections as part of our investigation.

Content of the Workshop

How did we survive and thrive in the American West? The exercises in this workshop are adapted from a longer unit of study on *The American West* that follow an in-depth interdisciplinary study of the American history and literature of the late 19th century American West. Content and background knowledge about key events and the people from this time period and the geography of the region as well as an exposure to a wide range of literature of and about the period can be applied to an investigation about an emerging cultural identity. In these exercises, you are invited to discover how a people survived, thrived, and adapted to their newly settled land. As you investigate the history of the American West with primary sources from the late 19th and early 20th centuries you will uncover the key concepts of culture that helped form a uniquely “western” cultural identity.



Directions for Participants

I. Concept Mapping

10 minutes

Discuss: How did people survive and thrive in the American West?

II. Orientation Activity

50 minutes

Investigating culture and document analysis with multimedia items

The purpose of the orientation activity is to introduce the Document Analysis tool and the concept of resilience. Participants will use a specific set of multimedia items and documents to practice in-depth analysis of a source. Specifically, this activity will investigate the cultural concept of *resilience* with multimedia sources.

- **As a whole group**
Discuss the concept of resilience. Review the Document Analysis tool, and group roles
- **In small groups**
Each group completes one Task Card
- **As a whole group**
Cinquain presentations
Compare worksheets and check for agreements
Discuss two aspects of resilience: (1) an individual's traits, (2) an individual's network of support

Materials

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Group #1 | Task Card #1 – Clementine
Task #1 Resource Cards
Additional Resource Cards
Document Analysis worksheet
Group roles
Resilience
Cinquain |
| Group #2 | Task Card #2 – Sweet Betsy from Pike
Task #2 Resource Cards
Document Analysis Worksheet
Additional Resource Cards
Document Analysis worksheet
Group roles
Resilience
Cinquain |

Equipment Computers



Group I Orientation Activity

TASK CARD #1 – CLEMENTINE

Journal Write and Share: Think about someone you know who always seems to bounce back no matter what the obstacles might be. What personal qualities helped the person be resilient?

RESILIENCE

All human beings have the inborn ability to bounce back successfully in spite of life's obstacles.

Directions for Clementine

Use the Resource Cards to analyze, sing, and listen to the song.
Complete the Document Analysis worksheet for the sheet music from resource card A.

Discuss the following questions with your group:

- From whose viewpoint are we seeing or reading or hearing?
- How do you know?
- What does this song mean to you?
- In the song, who demonstrates resilience (or not)?
- What is the evidence to support your ideas?

Group Task

Prepare a Cinquain that demonstrates the resilient traits of an individual miner or his daughter.



Orientation Activity

RESOURCE CARD A

FOR

TASK CARD #1 – CLEMENTINE

Online resources for Clementine

Listen

Clementine Audio

California Gold: Northern California Folk Music from the Thirties, Collected by Sidney Robertson Cowell

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cowellbib:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(afccc+a3348b1\)\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cowellbib:@field(NUMBER+@band(afccc+a3348b1)))

Analyze

Clementine Sheet Music

Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885

Clementine

<http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mussm&fileName=sm1885/04600/04660/mussm04660.db&recNum=0>





Orientation Activity

RESOURCE CARD

FOR

TASK CARD #1 – CLEMENTINE

Clementine Text

Songs for *Sweethearts of the Road*

These are popular songs that celebrate the overland experience as a grand adventure, a comic and at times sad commentary of real life in the West.

From *The Western Women's Reader*

Edited by Lillian Schlissel and Catherine Lavender

Clementine

In a cavern, in a canyon, excavating for a mine,
Lived a miner, forty-niner, and his daughter
Clementine.

(Chorus)

Oh my darlin', oh my darlin', oh my darlin'
Clementine,

You are lost and gone forever, dreadful sorry
Clementine.

Light she was and like a fairy,
And her shoes were number nine;
Herring boxes without topses,
Sandals were for Clementine.

(Chorus)

Drove she duckling to the water,
Every morning just at nine,
Hit her foot against a splinter,
Fell into the foaming brine.

(Chorus)

Ruby lips above the water,
Blowing bubbles soft and fine,
Alas for me, I was no swimmer,
So I lost my Clementine.

(Chorus)

In a churchyard near the canyon,
Where the myrtle doth entwine,
There grow roses and other posies,
Fertilized by Clementine.

(Chorus)

In my dreams she oft doth haunt me,
With her garments soaked in brine;
Though in life I used to hug her, now
She's dead I draw the line.

(Chorus)

Then the miner, forty-niner,
Soon began to peak and pine;
Thought he 'oughter jin'e his daughter,
Now he's with his Clementine.

(Chorus)



Group 2 Orientation Activity

TASK CARD #2 – SWEET BETSY FROM PIKE

Journal Write and Share: Think about someone you know who always seems to bounce back no matter what the obstacles might be. What kind of support does this individual have (e.g. friends, family, community)?

RESILIENCE

All human beings have the inborn ability to bounce back successfully in spite of life's obstacles.

Directions

Sing and listen to the song *Sweet Betsy from Pike*.

Complete the Document Analysis Worksheet for the transcript from resource card A.

Discuss the following questions with your group:

- From whose viewpoint are we seeing or reading or hearing?
- How do you know?
- What does this song mean to you? What story does the song tell?
- What obstacles does Sweet Betsy face? Who does she meet along the way and helps her? Does she show resilience?

Group Task

Prepare a Cinquain that demonstrates resilience, protective factors, and the network of support for a traveler on the trail.



Orientation Activity

RESOURCE CARD A

FOR

TASK CARD #2 – SWEET BETSY FROM PIKE

Online resources for Sweet Betsy from Pike

Listen

Sweet Betsy from Pike Audio

Voices from the Dust Bowl: The Charles L. Todd and Robert Sonkin Migrant Worker Collection, 1940-1941

[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/toddbib:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(4099a2\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/toddbib:@field(DOCID+@lit(4099a2)))

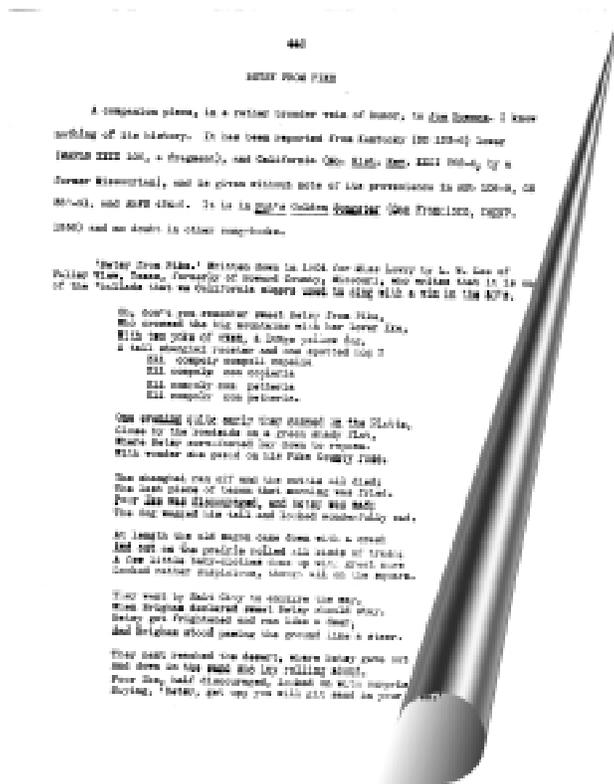
Analyze

Betsy from Pike Transcript

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California Gold: Northern California Folk Music from the Thirties, Collected by Sidney Robertson Cowell

[http://lweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cowell:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(GOLDR\)\)](http://lweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cowell:@field(DOCID+@lit(GOLDR)))





Sweet Betsy from Pike Text

Songs for *Sweethearts of the Road*

These are popular songs that celebrate the overland experience as a grand adventure, a comic and at times sad commentary of real life in the West.

From *The Western Women's Reader*

Edited by Lillian Schlissel and Catherine Lavender

Oh don't you remember sweet Betsy from Pike,
Who crossed the big mountains with her lover Ike,
With two yoke of oxen, a big yellow dog,
A tall Shanghai rooster, and one spotted hog?

Chorus

Singing dang fol dee dido,
Singing dan fol dee day.

One evening quite early they camped on the Platte.
'Twas near by the road on a green shady flat.
Where Betsy, sore-footed, lay down to repose—
With wonder Ike gazed on the Pike County rose.

The Shanghai ran off, and their cattle all died;
That morning the last piece of bacon was fried;
Poor Ike was discouraged and Betsy got mad,
The dog dropped his tail and looked wondrously sad.

They stopped at Salt Lake to inquire of the way,
Where Brigham declared that sweet Betsy should stay;
But Betsy got frightened and ran like a deer
While Brigham stood pawing the ground like a steer.

They soon reached the desert where Betsy gave out.
And down in the sand she lay rolling about;
While Ike, half distracted, looked on with surprise,
Saying, "Betsy, get up, you'll get sand in your eyes."

Sweet Betsy got up in a great deal of pain,
Declared she'd go back to Pike County again;
But Ike gave a sigh, and they fondly embraced,
And they traveled along with his arm round her waist.

The Injuns came down in a wild yelling horde,
And Betsy was scared they would scalp her adored;
Behind the front wagon wheel Betsy did crawl,
Ant there fought the Injuns with musket and ball.

They suddenly stopped on a very high hill,
With wonder looked down upon old Placerville;
Ike sighed when he said, and he cast his eyes down,
"Sweet Betsy, my darling, we've got to Hangtown."

Long Ike and sweet Betsy attended a dance;
Ike wore a pair of his Pike County pants;
Sweet Betsy was dressed up in ribbons and rings;
Says Ike, "you're an angel, but where are your wings?"

'Twas out on the prairie one bright starry night,
They broke out the whiskey and Betsy got tight,
She sang and she howled and she danced o'er the plain,
And showed her bare legs (arse) to the whole wagon train.

The terrible desert was burning and bare,
And Isaac he shrank from the death lurkin' there,
"Dear old Pike County, I'll come back to you."
Says Betsy, "You'll go by yourself if you do."

They swam wild rivers and climbed the tall peaks,
And camped on the prairies for weeks upon weeks,
Starvation and cholera, hard work and slaughter,
They reached Californy, spite of hell and high water.

A miner said, "Betsy, will you dance with me?"
"I will, you old hoss, if you don't make too free.
But don't dance me hard, do you want to know why?
Doggone ye I'm chock full of strong alkali.

Long Ike and sweet Betsy got married, of course,
But Ike, getting jealous, obtained a divorce,
While Betsy, well satisfied, said with a shout,
"Goodbye, you big lummoX, I'm glad you backed out!"



Directions for Participants

Group Activities for Inquiry—60 minutes

Independent small group activities

Inquiry Activity #1 - **Life On The Frontier**

Inquiry Activity #2 - **Do Something for Wildness**

These activities provide groups a chance to work independently and produce a product of their learning. The intention here is to encourage peer to peer instruction with feedback, guidance, and coaching from the teacher. Each activity has a performance product that is shared with the whole group.

- **As a whole group**
Review the tasks and performance products.
- **In small groups**
Divide into groups of four and rotate group roles. Each group has one Task Card and several Resource Cards for this activity. The group works independently with minimal guidance to prepare a final performance.
- **As a whole group**
Group Performance, discussion, and activity debrief

Materials

Group #1 Inquiry Activity #1 — Task Card
Life On The Frontier
 Inquiry Activity #1 — Resource Cards
 Document Analysis Worksheet
 Group Roles
 Resilience

Group #2 Inquiry Activity #2 — Task Card
Do Something for Wildness
 Inquiry Activity #2 — Resource Cards
 Document Analysis worksheet
 Group roles
 Resilience

Equipment: Computer

Group Presentations — 10 minutes

Workshop Evaluation — 10 minutes



Inquiry Activity I

Life On The Frontier

TASK CARD

In his *The Sod-House Frontier*, Everett Dick provided the details of how one builds his home where there are neither trees for timber nor knowledge of how to make adobe bricks. It's estimated that, on the western prairie, as many as 90 percent of the settlers built with sod.

This excerpt from *Mountains and Molehills* is a story about a fire in a small town and how the town gets rebuilt. Your task is to find evidence of resilience among the people who lived on the frontier from these stories and photographs.

RESILIENCE

All human beings have the inborn ability to bounce back successfully in spite of life's obstacles.

Directions

As a team:

- Read Resource Card A, *The Sod-House* and Resource Card B, *Mountains and Molehills*
- Complete an analysis of photos of sod houses (Resources C and D) by using the Primary Source Analysis worksheet

Discuss the following questions with your group:

1. What do you suppose it felt like to live in a sod house?
2. How did the town look and sound after the fire described in *Mountains and Molehills*?
3. What additional clues do the photographs offer you about living on the frontier?
4. How did people survive and thrive?
5. Discuss how you think living in this sort of situation shows the resilience of people who settled the American West? How did they create a network of people in their family, friends, and community to survive and thrive?

Group Task

Create a Tableau

Create and interpret an event through the use of a tableau. As a group, plan a frozen scene to create and perform that shows resilience. Develop a list of the various people in the scene and brainstorm the possible thoughts and dialogue for each person.

Options to Consider

A narrator may be included to read a portion of a text describing the scene. A leader taps a person in the scene who speaks "in character" while the others remain frozen. When tapped again, the character stops speaking. Each person has an opportunity to speak; only one character speaks at a time.



RESOURCE CARD A for Inquiry Activity I Life On The Frontier

A Rather Pretentious Sod house by Everett Dick

*In his *The Sod-House Frontier*, Everett Dick provided the details of how one builds his home where there are neither trees for timber nor knowledge of how to make adobe bricks. It's estimated that, on the western prairie, as many as 90 percent of the settlers built with sod.*

These structures were of various sizes but a rather pretentious sod house followed a common building plan of sixteen feet wide and twenty feet long. The sod bricks were made by turning over furrows on about half an acre of ground where the sod was thickest and strongest. Care was taken to make the furrows of even width and depth so that the walls of the cabin would rise with regularity and evenness.

A spade was used to cut the sod into bricks about three feet long. These bricks were then carried to the building site by wagon or by a float made of planks or the forks of a tree. J. Clarence Norton of La Harpe, Kansas, related that in building the house on the homestead, the line for the wall was drawn after dark so that it could be located by the North Star. For the first layer of the wall the three-foot bricks were placed side by side around the foundation except where the door was to be made. The cracks were then filled with dirt and two more layers were placed on these. The joints were broken as in brick laying. Every third course was laid crosswise of the others to bind them together. This process was continued until [it] was high enough to put a roof on the structure. A door frame and two window frames were set in the wall and the sod built around them at the proper time. Sometimes the builder drove hickory withes down into the wall as a sort of reinforcement. The gables were built up of sod or frame according to the means of the settler. The poorer settler built a roof in the crudest manner. A forked post set in each of the cabin furnished a support for the ridge pole. The rafters were made of poles and the sheeting of brush; a layer of prairie grass covered this, and over all sod was placed. The settler who could afford it put a frame on his sod house. In that event, sheeting was nailed on the rafters and tar paper spread over the sheeting boards. This was then covered with sods thinner than those used to cover the side walls, and laid with grass side down; the cracks were filled with fine clay. From time to time this dirt filling had to be renewed as the rains carried it away. In a short time, great growths of sunflowers and grass appeared on the roofs. If the house were to be plastered, a mixture of clay and ashes was used. If it were to be a smooth finish, the builder took a spade and hewed the wall to a smooth finish and symmetrical proportions. The whole thing, as one pioneer said, was "made without mortar, square, plumb, or greenbacks." All that was needed was a pair of willing hands, and many homeseekers came to the plains with no assets other than a wagon cover.



The little sod cabin was frequently divided into two rooms by a piece of rag carpet or quilt. The windows and door were closed with buffalo robes or other blankets. The house was crudely furnished. A nail keg and a soapbox did duty as chairs. A dry goods box made a table and a rude bed of boards was fashioned in the corner. When the migration immediately following the Civil War broke in its fury, the demand for doors, sashes, and blinds was so great that even small towns ordered in carload lots. The dealer at the little town of Milford, Nebraska, advertised in March, 1871, that he had three carloads of this type of merchandise on the way.

The ordinary sod house had grave faults. Its few windows permitted little light and air for ventilation. The immaculate housekeeper abominated them because they were so hard to keep clean. The dirt and straw kept dropping on everything in the house. The most disagreeable feature of these houses was the leaky roof. Few of the sod-covered houses really turned water. A heavy rain came, soaked into the dirt roof, and soon little rivulets of muddy water were running through the sleeper's hair. The sod-house dweller had to learn to migrate when it rained. If the rain came from the north, the north side of the house leaked, and it was necessary to move everything to the south side; if from the south, a move had to be made again. When the roof was saturated it dripped for three days after the sky was bright. Dishes, pots, pans, and kettles were placed about the house to catch the continual dripping. One pioneer woman remembered frying pancakes with someone holding an umbrella over her and the stove. A visitor at the home of a Dakota woman said that when great clouds rolled up in the afternoon the lady of the homestead began gathering up all the old dishes in the house and lacing them here and there on the floor, on the stove, and on the bed. The visitor remarked that the prairie woman seemed to understand her business for when the rain came down in torrents a few minutes later every drop that came through the numerous holes in the roof of the shack went straight into those vessels. After a heavy rain it was necessary to hang all the bed clothing and wearing apparel on the line to dry. One old settler mentioned keeping the clothes in the covered wagon to keep them dry.

When the roof was well soaked its weight was immense. The heavy rafters sank deeper and deeper into the soggy walls until occasionally the roof caved in or the walls collapsed, burying people underneath the ruins. To prevent this kind of accident, heavy posts were placed in the house to support the roof; these were a great nuisance because they took up so much room. Frequently the cabin was covered with long coarse prairie grass. This type of roof also had the fault of dripping water after a heavy rain.

There were, however, some striking advantages of the sod house. It was cool in summer and warm in winter. There was no fear of the wind blowing it over and no danger of destruction by prairie fires. Neither was there danger of fire from a faulty fireplace. A fireplace was safely built of sod. The average life of a sod house was six or seven years.

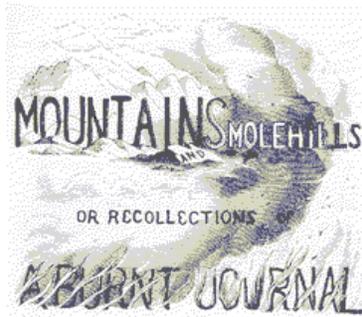
From
Hillerman, Tony. *The Best of the West, An Anthology of Classic Writing from the American West*. HarperCollins. 1991.



RESOURCE CARD B for Inquiry Activity I Life on the Frontier

CHAPTER II

June, 1850.



THE fire was fast subsiding; and as the embers died away, and the heavy smoke rolled off to leeward, the site of the conflagration was plainly marked out to the spectator like a great black chart. There is nothing particularly impressive in the scene, for although four hundred houses have been destroyed, they were but of wood, or thin sheet-iron, and the "devouring element" has made a clean sweep of every thing, except a few brick chimneys and iron pots. Every- body seems in good-humor, and there is no reason why the stranger, who has lost nothing by the calamity, should allow himself to be plunged into

melancholy reflections! Planks and lumber are already being carted in all directions, and so soon as the embers cool, the work of rebuilding will commence.

I found it amusing next day to walk over the ground and observe the effects of the intense heat on the articles which were strewed around. Gun-barrels were twisted and knotted like snakes; there were tons of nails welded together by the heat, standing in the shape of the kegs which had contained them; small lakes of molten glass of all the colors of the rainbow; tools of all descriptions, from which the wood-work had disappeared, and pitch-pots filled with melted lead and glass. Here was an iron house that had collapsed with the heat, and an iron fire-proof safe that had burst under the same influence; spoons, knives, forks, and crockery were melted up together in heaps; crucibles even had cracked; preserved meats had been unable to stand this second cooking, and had exploded in every direction. The loss was very great by this fire, as the houses destroyed had been for the most part filled with merchandise; but there was little time wasted in lamentation, the energy of the people showed itself at once in action, and in forty-eight hours after the fire the whole district resounded to the din of busy workmen.

On the "lot" where I had observed the remains of gun-barrels and nails, stands its late proprietor, Mr. Jones, who is giving directions to a master-carpenter, or "boss," for the rebuilding of a new store, the materials for which are already on the spot. The carpenter promises to get every thing "fixed right off," and have the store ready in two days. At this juncture passes Mr. Smith, also in company with a cargo of building materials; he was the owner of the iron house; he says to Jones, interrogatively-
"Burnt out?"

JONES. "Yes, and burst up ."

SMITH. "Flat?"

JONES. "Flat as a d—d pancake!"

SMITH. "It's a great country."

JONES. "It's nothing shorter."

And in a couple of days both Smith and Jones are on their legs again, and with a little help from their friends live to grow rich perhaps, and build brick buildings that withstand the flames.



RESOURCE CARD C for Inquiry Activity I Life on the Frontier

The Northern Great Plains, 1880-1920: Photographs from the Fred Hultstrand and F.A. Pazandak Photograph Collections

Photo

Mr. & Mrs. David Vincent and daughter, Martha, by their sod house, near White River, South Dakota.

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/?ammem/ngp:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(ndfahult+c007\)\);displayType=1:m856sd=ndfahultcm856sf=c007](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/?ammem/ngp:@field(NUMBER+@band(ndfahult+c007));displayType=1:m856sd=ndfahultcm856sf=c007)

{view large jpg}



RESOURCE CARD D for Inquiry Activity I Life on the Frontier

The Northern Great Plains, 1880-1920: Photographs from the Fred Hultstrand and F.A. Pazandak Photograph Collections

Photo

John Bakken sod house, Milton, North Dakota

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/ngp:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(ndfahult+c061\)\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/ngp:@field(NUMBER+@band(ndfahult+c061)))

{view large jpg}





Inquiry Activity 2

Do Something for Wildness

TASK CARD

John Muir believed that we must exist in balance with nature and that it is our responsibility to preserve the natural beauty of the land for future generations. President Theodore Roosevelt believed he should be a “steward of the people” and take whatever necessary action for the “public good.” John Muir convinced President Roosevelt that vigorous action was necessary if these natural resources all over America were to be saved for all the people. Through a series of historical circumstances, they meet on Glacier Point in Yosemite Valley, California.

RESILIENCE

All human beings have the inborn ability to bounce back successfully in spite of life’s obstacles.

Directions

As a team:

- Complete an analysis of the photo on Resource Card A: *Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir on Glacier Point*. Use the Primary Source Analysis worksheet
- Read Resource Card B *Background Information on the photograph at Glacier Point* and Resource Card C *John Muir and Teddy Roosevelt biographical notes*
- Discuss the following questions with your group:

Questions for discussion:

1. What are some common social concerns that were shared by John Muir and President Roosevelt?
2. What personal characteristics do you think John Muir and President Roosevelt have in common?
3. How do you suppose Muir influenced Roosevelt’s thinking about conservation?
4. What additional clues about **resilience** does the photograph make you think about?
5. Discuss how you think living in this sort of situation shows the **resilience** of individuals in the American West. What are the characteristics of these individuals that help them survive and thrive?

Group Task

Dialogue

Create a conversation between John Muir and President Roosevelt at Glacier Point in Yosemite. Present the conversation as if it might have taken place, incorporating factual information. Integrate the idea of resilience into each character and into the dialogue.

Options to Consider

Imagine who else might have been present. Photographers, newspaper reporters, others? What role might they play as part of this dialogue?



RESOURCE CARD A

Inquiry Activity 2

Do Something for Wildness

In May of 1903 President Theodore Roosevelt invited the naturalist John Muir on a four-day camping trip in the Yosemite wilderness. At the time of this historic meeting, many millions of acres of our western forest were being exploited by hunting, lumber, stock, and mining interests.

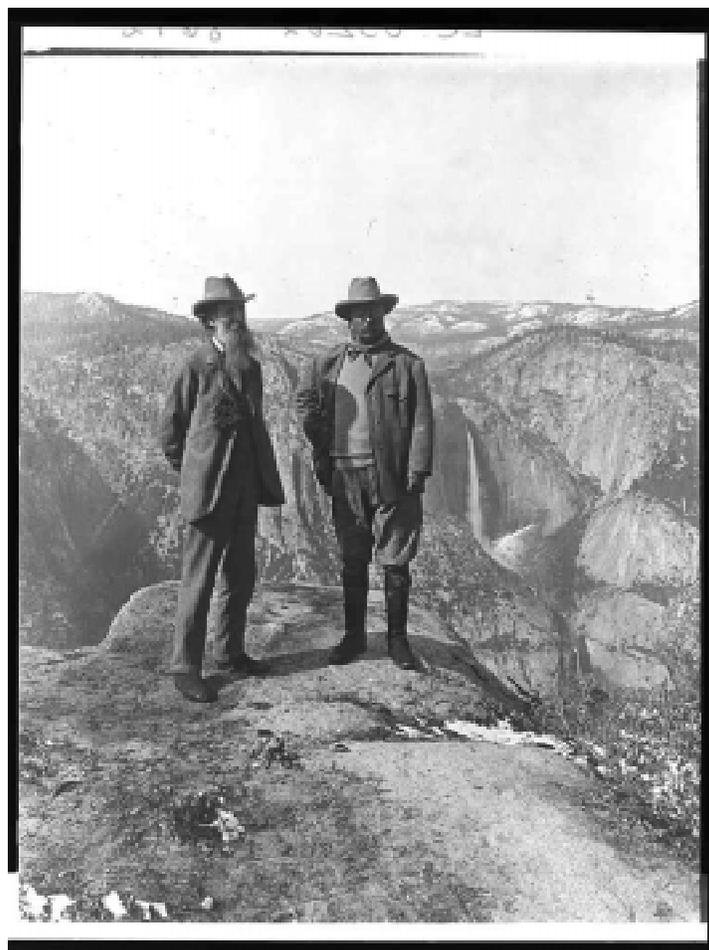
Collection

The Evolution of the Conservation Movement, 1850-1920 (multi-format collection)

Locate Online

Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir on Glacier Point, Yosemite Valley, California

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/consrvbib:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(amrvp+3a|1256\)\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/consrvbib:@field(NUMBER+@band(amrvp+3a|1256)))





RESOURCE CARD B

Inquiry Activity 2

Do Something for Wildness

Background Information on the photograph at Glacier Point:

This photograph was taken at Glacier Point in Yosemite Valley, California, in 1906, after the area was declared a national park. The two men pictured are John Muir, a famous conservationist and founder of the Sierra Club, and Theodore Roosevelt, the U.S. president at the time.

The following excerpt, from a book about John Muir's public service, explains the historical background to the photograph:

"In May 1903, Roosevelt came to Yosemite to have Muir show him the valley and its forests. They camped one night under the Big Trees; they rode horses high above the Yosemite floor and camped out two more nights. From Glacier Point, Muir pointed out the great peaks and valleys to Roosevelt and told him how important these forests and water resources were to all the people. Muir told Roosevelt about "the timber thieves, and the destructive work of the lumbermen, and other spoilers of the forests." Muir convinced Roosevelt that vigorous action was necessary if these natural resources all over America were to be saved for all the people.

Roosevelt described this trip with Muir in glowing terms: "Lying out at night under those giant sequoias was like lying in a temple built by no hand of man, a temple grander than any human architect could by any possibility build, and I hope for the preservation of the groves of giant trees simply because it would be a shame to our civilization to let them disappear. They are monuments in themselves."

Not all of the Yosemite country was in the national park that had been created in 1890. The State of California still owned Yosemite Valley itself. In 1904, Muir helped a campaign get under way to have California cede back to the United States this important land that Congress had granted California in 1864. After a great struggle, the bill was passed by the California legislature. But the question remained whether Congress would accept the gift. Lumber interests moved into Washington, D.C., saying they wanted the sugar pine trees for cutting. Other private interests wanted part of the land for water reservoirs, grazing, and other purposes. Muir and the Sierra Club worked hard to get the bill through Congress. At last they succeeded, and in 1906 Yosemite Valley became part of the national park."

[Excerpted from *Muir of the Mountains*, by William O. Douglas. Abridged edition. 1994. Copyrighted by Sierra Club Books, San Francisco. Reprinted by permission of Sierra Club Books.]

For full text see:

http://www.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/life/john_muir_public_service_by_william_o_douglas.html



RESOURCE CARD C

Inquiry Activity 2

Do Something for Wildness

John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt biographical notes

John Muir

John Muir - farmer, inventor, shepherd, naturalist, explorer, writer, and conservationist - was born on April 21, 1838 in Dunbar, Scotland. Until the age of eleven, he attended the local schools of that small coastal town. In 1849, the Muir family emigrated to the United States, settling first at Fountain Lake and then moving to Hickory Hill Farm near Portage, Wisconsin.

It was California's Sierra Nevada and Yosemite that truly claimed him. In 1868, he walked across the San Joaquin Valley through waist-high wildflowers and into the high country for the first time. Later he would write: "Then it seemed to me the Sierra should be called, not the Nevada, or Snowy Range, but the Range of Light...the most divinely beautiful of all the mountain chains I have ever seen." He herded sheep through that first summer and made his home in Yosemite.

Through a series of articles appearing in *Century* magazine, Muir drew attention to the devastation of mountain meadows and forests by sheep and cattle. With the help of *Century's* associate editor, Robert Underwood Johnson, Muir worked to remedy this destruction. In 1890, due in large part to the efforts of Muir and Johnson, an act of Congress created Yosemite National Park. Muir was also personally involved in the creation of Sequoia, Mount Rainier, Petrified Forest and Grand Canyon National Parks. Muir deservedly is often called the "Father of our National Park System".

Johnson and others suggested to Muir that an association be formed to protect the newly created Yosemite National Park from the assaults of stockmen and others who would diminish its boundaries. In 1892, Muir and a number of his supporters founded the Sierra Club to, in Muir's words, "do something for wildness and make the mountains glad." Muir served as the Club's president until his death in 1914.

In 1901, Muir published *Our National Parks*, the book that brought him to the attention of President Theodore Roosevelt. In 1903, Roosevelt visited Muir in Yosemite. There, together, beneath the trees, they laid the foundation of Roosevelt's innovative and notable conservation programs.

John Muir was perhaps this country's most famous and influential naturalist and conservationist. He taught the people of his and our time the importance of experiencing and protecting our natural heritage. His words have heightened our perception of nature. His personal and determined involvement in the great conservation questions of the day was and remains an inspiration for environmental activists everywhere.

For full text see:

http://www.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/life/muir_biography.html



Teddy Roosevelt

With the assassination of President McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, not quite 43, became the youngest President in the Nation's history. He brought new excitement and power to the presidency, as he vigorously led Congress and the American public toward progressive reforms and a strong foreign policy.

He took the view that the president, as a "steward of the people," should take whatever action necessary for the public good unless expressly forbidden by law or the Constitution. "I did not usurp power," he wrote, "but I did greatly broaden the use of executive power."

In 1884 his first wife, Alice Lee Roosevelt, and his mother died on the same day. Roosevelt spent much of the next two years on his ranch in the Badlands of Dakota Territory. There he mastered his sorrow as he lived in the saddle, driving cattle, hunting big game—he even captured an outlaw. On a visit to London, he married Edith Carow in December 1886.

During the Spanish-American War, Roosevelt was lieutenant colonel of the Rough Rider Regiment, which he led on a charge at the battle of San Juan. He was one of the most conspicuous heroes of the war.

Roosevelt steered the United States more actively into world politics. He liked to quote a favorite proverb, "Speak softly and carry a big stick..."

Some of Theodore Roosevelt's most effective achievements were in conservation. He added enormously to the national forests in the West, reserved lands for public use, and fostered great irrigation projects.

For full text see:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/glimpse/presidents/html/tr26.html>



Appendices

General Resources

Reproduce the following worksheets and resource cards

- Document Analysis worksheet
- Document Analysis worksheet sample
- Resilience
- Group roles
- Cinquain

Teacher Planning Resources

Unit Planning Guide

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Use this tool to question, critique, and assess the object's value in the reconstruction of the history of our cultural identity in the American West.

PART I Thinking Questions

Use this general set of thinking questions to ground group overall discussions.

1. From whose viewpoint are we seeing or reading or hearing? From what angle or perspective?
2. How do we know when we know? What's the evidence, and how reliable is it?
3. How are things, events or people connected to each other? What is the cause and what is the effect? How do they fit?
4. So what? Why does it matter? What does it all mean?

-Habits of Mind, adapted from Deborah Meier

PART II Complete the Document Analysis worksheet

Item title or caption	
CATEGORY	INFORMATION AND EVIDENCE
<p>Digital Library & Collection</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name of the collection and location 2. Time period 3. A phrase or sentence that describes the contents of the entire collection 	
<p>Item – Type and Physical Condition Items can be classified into four groups: (1) written, (2) oral, (3) visual, and (4) electronic transmissions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Item Type: What type of item is this? Also, what is it? Photo, film/video, audio, sheet music, program, poster, broadside, book, pamphlet, proceedings, etc. 2. Physical Condition: Describe the original condition of the item: faded, cracked, color, blur, water stains, fingerprints, etc. 	
<p>Item Provenance What do you know about the complete history of ownership of the object?</p>	
<p>General Item Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Date created or published 2. Author(s): Who created the object? Was it created/written/produced for someone? For whom? Was it created for a purpose/cause? 3. Location: Where was it created or recorded? 4. Description & Notes: What written information on or about the object is available? 5. Bibliographic record information: Call Number, Repository, Digital ID. 	

CATEGORY**ANALYSIS AND EVIDENCE****Analysis and Evidence**

Discuss and list evidence.

1. Is it real? How do you know the object or item is genuine?
2. For whom was it created or made? From whose viewpoint are we seeing or reading or hearing?
3. Has it been changed from the original? Has the document been translated or has the format been changed in translation? (from poetry into prose, for example)

Unanswered Questions

When we examined this object we wondered.....

Some questions that came up in our discussion were...

Cultural Analysis/Evidence Interpretation

How does this object demonstrate resilience? Give evidence of your thinking.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Use this tool to question, critique, and assess the object's value in the reconstruction of the history of our cultural identity in the American West.

PART I

Thinking Questions

Use this general set of thinking questions to ground group overall discussions.

1. From whose viewpoint are we seeing or reading or hearing? From what angle or perspective?
2. How do we know when we know? What's the evidence, and how reliable is it?
3. How are things, events or people connected to each other? What is the cause and what is the effect? How do they fit?
4. So what? Why does it matter? What does it all mean?

-Habits of Mind, adapted from Deborah Meier

PART II

Complete the Document Analysis Worksheet

Item title or caption	A BUCKaroo conversation after a morning's work
CATEGORY	INFORMATION AND EVIDENCE
Digital Library & Collection 1. Name of the collection and location 2. Time period 3. A phrase or sentence that describes the contents of the entire collection	Title: BUCKaroos in Paradise: RanChing Culture in Northern Nevada, 1945-1982 The Collection presents documentation of a Nevada Cattle-ranChing Community, with a focus on the family-run Ninety-Six RanCh.
Item – Type and Physical Condition Items can be classified into four groups: (1) written, (2) oral, (3) visual, and (4) electronic transmissions. 1. Item Type: What type of item is this? Also, what is it? Photo, film/video, audio, sheet music, program, poster, broadside, book, pamphlet, proceedings, etc. 2. Physical Condition: Describe the original condition of the item: faded, cracked, color, blur, water stains, fingerprints, etc.	Type: original 16mm film digitized for the web Physical Condition: The quality of sound in this video varies. It has crackling noises that seem to be due to the quality of the recording. At times the conversation is hard to hear.
Item Provenance What do you know about the complete history of ownership of the object?	The film is part of a large ethnographic field research project from the American Folklife Center. It has always belonged to the Library of Congress.
General Item Information: 1. Date created or published 2. Author(s): Who created the object? Was it created/written/produced for someone? For whom? Was it created for a purpose/cause? 3. Location: Where was it created or recorded? 4. Description & Notes: What written information on or about the object is available? 5. Bibliographic record information: Call Number, Repository, Digital ID.	1. Created between 1945-1982 2. The authors were from the American Folklife Center. The purpose for making the film was to document daily life. 3. The film was taken on location of the Ninety-Six Ranch in Paradise, Nevada. Specifically it shows a view inside Bradshaw Cabin. 4. This item has a long description. It summarizes the content and conversation of the video. 5. Call Number NV9-VT3, Digital ID a-fc96ran v007

CATEGORY**ANALYSIS AND EVIDENCE**

Discuss and list evidence.

1. Is it real? How do you know the object or item is genuine?
2. For whom was it created or made? From whose viewpoint are we seeing or reading or hearing?
3. Has it been changed from the original? Has the document been translated or has the format been changed in translation? (from poetry into prose, for example)

This film seems to be a real conversation between two buckaroos because they speak naturally. The contents of the cabin, the men's clothing, and the sound and content of their conversation seem to be the best evidence that this is real. The notes from American Folklife confirm this too.

The content of the film is from the point of view of the buckaroos. We can hear what they think about what they did that day.

The item has been made into digital format from the original 16mm film. It is probable that the film was edited for length.

Unanswered Questions

When we examined this object we wondered.....

Some questions that came up in our discussion were...

What was it like to get up early in the morning and ride a horse to find lost cows? Was everyone friendly to each other on the ranch like you see in this film? Does this place still exist in Nevada? What has changed since the film?

Cultural Analysis/Evidence Interpretation

How does this object demonstrate resilience? Give evidence of your thinking.

The buckaroos appear to be resilient men. Listening to their conversation you can hear them discuss what happened in a friendly way. They also talk about some of the difficulties they had finding the cattle. They explain that it is hard to chase cattle from the dense mountain thicket. Each man totals their catch of cattle.

The fact that they continue to work this hard job, appear to like it, and enjoy the company of others shows resilience. They have the support of each other's friendship and are optimistic about success in their work.



RESOURCE CARD

Resilience

What is Resiliency?

All human beings have the inborn ability to bounce back successfully in spite of life's obstacles.

“Resiliency is the human capacity for transformation and change” - Robert Lifton

Resilience Traits

Resilient individuals often have the following traits:

Social competence

- Ability to develop positive relationships
- Communication skills
- Empathy/caring
- Sense of humor
- Flexible

Problem Solving Skills

- Critical thinking/Reflective thinking
- Ability to plan
- Resourceful
- Initiative
- Ability to resolve conflict

Autonomy and sense of self

- Self-esteem, identity
- Self-disciplined
- Adaptive
- Internal locus of control

Sense of purpose and future

- Belief in a bright future
- Optimism
- Aspirations/Goals
- Spiritual connectedness

Network of Support

Protective Factors: The Web of Resiliency is strong when friends, family and community members offer the following:

Caring and Support

- Unconditional love
- Compassion
- Patience
- Listening
- Being there

High Expectations

- Positive attributions
- Focused on strengths
- Guidelines for behavior
- Rituals
- Reframing
- Belief in innate resiliency of human beings

Opportunities to participate and contribute

- Safe place
- Responsibilities
- Included
- Contributions welcomed



RESOURCE CARD

Group Roles

Preparation for Group Roles

Assigning roles to individuals in each group is very important and has been found to encourage full participation by all members. Be sure and rotate the roles for each activity.

Facilitator

Makes sure everyone understands the task and all members participate. Helps the group develop a plan of action. Calls the teacher if the group needs help.

Materials Manager and Recorder

Collects, distributes, and manages materials for the task. Makes sure group has notes from the discussion and completes the written tasks.

Time Keeper and Reporter

Keeps track of time for the group. Organizes the group's report to the class, discusses what will be reported and helps introduce and summarizes the activity to the class.

Encourager and Harmonizer

Keeps everyone on task. Helps facilitate agreements in the group, make sure there are no "put downs." and checks that everyone has a chance to fully participate.



Cinquain

A FIVE LINE STANZA

(1) subject

(2) adjectives

(3) adverbs

(1) phrase

(1) synonym



Teacher Planning Resources

Unit Introduction

This is an example of how an in-depth unit using these techniques and materials might be created:

The American West *—a changing cultural landscape*

Purpose

The content is anchored in the larger question of, “How did people survive and thrive in the American West?”

This unit is designed to follow an in-depth study of the history and/or literature of the late 19th and early 20th century American West. You and your students need sufficient background in the key events and the people from this time period, as well as an understanding of the basic geography of the region. In this unit, you are invited to discover how a people adapted to their newly settled land. As you investigate the history of the American West with primary sources from the late 19th and early 20th centuries students will uncover and analyze cultural concepts that helped form a uniquely “western” cultural identity. The content being investigated are culture and our environment.

Multiple Abilities

Students will use multiple abilities (dramatic, musical, visual and spatial, linguistic) as they complete the various tasks in this unit.

Teacher Preparation for the Classroom

Unit Organization

Below is an example of one possible structure for organizing a longer unit of study. The basic components developed for this unit of study are in two parts. First, there are several introduction activities that all groups work through together. The introductory activities introduce group work, link to prior knowledge, and broadly introduce the new content. Second, there are a series of group work activities that offer students an opportunity to explore the new content in more depth.



Part I – Unit Introduction Activities

The Skill Builder

Identifies a behavior

The intention of this exercise is to teach a specific behavior for working effectively in collaborative groups. In *The American West – a changing cultural landscape*, the purpose is two-fold. First, it is designed to offer students the experience about how the same information can be used and viewed differently. This is often a misunderstood dynamic and source of conflict when working in collaboration. Second, this exercise is an opportunity to introduce the use of student lead mini-performances to teach content because throughout the unit, each in-depth inquiry activity ends with a mini-performance that groups share with their peers. (*Directions for Skill Builder are not included in this packet.*)

Concept Mapping

Organizes prior knowledge

A concept map will assist you in the organization of prior knowledge. It is an open-ended way to explore what is known, your perceptions, and what you remember as important. Concept maps can be used as pre-evaluation.

Orientation Activity

Introduces the content

This unit links understanding cultural identity to the content of the American West. The cultural concepts are used as a lens to analyze an emerging cultural identity in the late 19th century and early 20th centuries. This activity is also designed to introduce and use tools to investigate and support analysis from a specific set of documents.



Part II – Group Inquiries to Explore Ideas and Topics

Content Activities

Small group activities – authentic experiences and inquiry

It is important to note that the organization of these content activities provide students an opportunity to view the same content repeatedly each day. The intention here is to peer-to-peer instruction with feedback, guidance, and coaching from the teacher.

Assessment

Several forms of assessment need to be imbedded in the unit.

The teacher provides a balance of individual and group feedback is an important component to the design of the unit. In brief, here are the basic feedback components for assessment:

- Group Presentation - oral
- Group Report - written
- Individual Report - written
- Teacher Observation –for groups and individuals

This chart demonstrates how groups experience the content activities.

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4
Activity 4	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3
Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 1	Activity 2
Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 1

Time and Suggested Sequence of Activities with students

The following sequence and suggested time is recommended for unit activities:

Activity	Suggested Time
The Skill Builder	1-2 hours
Concept Mapping	1-2 hours
Orientation Activity	1-3 hours
Activities 1-4	1.5 hours for activity series
Group Work	
1. Reading task cards and discussion	1. 30 minutes
2. Preparation of presentation & reports	2. 20 minutes
3. Presentations	3. 10 minutes per group



Group Work Information

The full design of **The American West – A Changing Cultural Landscape**, is rooted in an instructional approach and curriculum design model called Complex Instruction. Based on many years of research in the Stanford School of Education by Dr. Elizabeth Cohen, and Dr. Rachel Lotan, this approach is designed to increase student access to learning through group work. The content has been developed with the support of scholars. The teaching approach and related materials in Complex Instruction involve intensive staff development to be fully implemented.

Group work is designed around a central question or major concept of a discipline. The unit contains four group-lead in-depth activities designed to stimulate thinking, discussion, and investigation. When the groups report their results to each other, the teacher needs to ask questions to probe for student understanding, make connections, and provide feedback to reinforce the fundamental content.

The curriculum materials for this unit draw on primary sources and offer students access to authentic academic content. Materials selected are therefore not grade-level specific. An important feature of this curriculum model is the nature of open-ended questions; questions that not only the teacher introduces, but also collecting and discussing important questions that the student himself generates and ponders. It is important that questions not have one right or wrong answer. The structure of group activities asks the entire group to work together to decide how to present their group learning and products. This contributes to the development of higher-order thinking skills. The role of the teacher is to probe for understanding and provide on-going feedback.



Group Work Structure

The model for this unit is based on the idea that understanding of a concept is best when students have a chance to work through the concept repeatedly. Ideally each group needs to go through each activity and present it to the whole group at the end of each activity.

Group Roles

Preparation for Group Roles

Assigning roles to individuals in each group is very important and has been found to encourage full participation by all members. Be sure and rotate the roles for each activity.

Facilitator

Makes sure everyone understands the task and all members participate. Helps the group develop a plan of action. Calls the teacher if the group needs help.

Materials Manager and Recorder

Collects, distributes, and manages materials for the task. Makes sure group has notes from the discussion and completes the written tasks.

Time Keeper and Reporter

Keeps track of time for the group. Organizes the group's report to the class, discusses what will be reported and helps introduce and summarizes the activity to the class.

Encourager and Harmonizer

Keeps everyone on task. Helps facilitate agreements in the group, makes sure there are no "put downs." and checks that everyone has a chance to fully participate.